

REMARKS

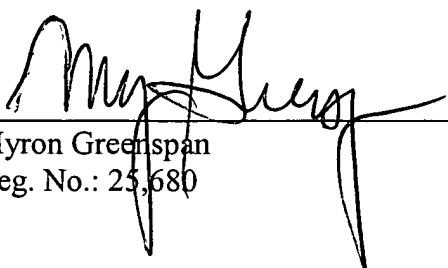
Further to several telephone conferences with the Examiner, reflected in Interview Summary Records, claims 1 and 8 have now been amended as suggested by the Examiner to require that each of the flexible reinforcements having the U-shaped cross-section be continuously formed by the same material from one distal end of the U-shaped cross-section to an opposing distal end of the U-shaped cross-section. The Examiner has indicated that this language would distinguish over the prior art and place the claims in condition for allowance. Accordingly, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance and early allowance is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of the fees associated with this communication and during the pendency of this application, such as an extension or issue fee if mistakenly not paid or insufficient funds, and/or any other fee due but not paid by check, etc., or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 10-0100.

Dated: July 14, 2008

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Respectfully submitted,


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